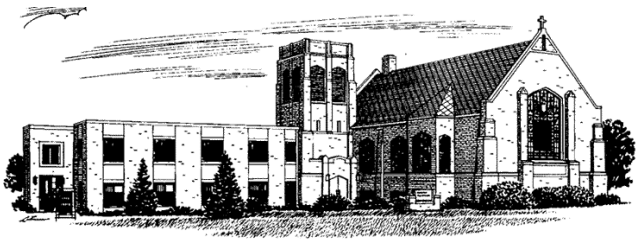

SARON NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook: www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org

Marcus Roll, Senior Choir Director,
Bell Choir Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Margaret Froehlich, Administrative Assistant
Nanci Fenrick, Financial Secretary
Emily Gaul, Child Care

Sundays at Saron:
During the School Year:
8:30 & 11:00 A.M. Worship
Childcare provided
9:40 Learning for Ages 2 – Adult

Summers (thru Labor Day weekend):
9:30 Holy Communion
Childcare provided
No Learning Hour

All are welcome!
We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Rev. Whayne Hougland, Bishop of the Episcopal
Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!

December 2018

I do not need to tell you what a busy time this is. Decorations are being placed, gifts are being purchased, and travel plans are made. And yet, I've read a description of Advent as about the "art of waiting." It is a time for slowing down and leaning together as we gather in darkness and wait for the light. We wait in courage and hope for the one who brings light and life to a broken world. It is my prayer that in our waiting, we experience the joy of community and the peace of reconciliation that comes through our Savior. Below are some opportunities that might help in our waiting, and finally in our celebration of Christ's birth.

Advent Mid-Week
"At the Table"
Soup Supper at 6:00 pm
Worship at 7:00 pm
+
December 5
December 12
Followed by Hanging of the Greens
(church decorating)
December 19
Followed by Singing of Christmas Carols

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
A Christmas To Believe In
Sunday, December 16; 11:00 am
(Regular Worship at 8:30 am)

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP
Monday, December 24; 7:00 & 10:00 pm
Candlelight and Holy Communion
Child Care Provided at 7:00 pm

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP
Tuesday, December 25; 9:30 am
Holy Communion

Pastor Joan

Caring and Sharing

In Our Prayers –

We remember in our thoughts and prayers: **Arla Huelsberg** is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Lila Roethel** is at the Willows; **Bernice Koski** is at Woodland Terrace; **Virginia Anserello** is at Pine Ridge, Stevensville.

Serving in the military:

Andy Wedde – **California**

Office Hours at Saron

Margaret (secretary): Mon-Tues, 9 AM - 1 PM
Weds of Newsletter Week, 9 AM - 1 PM
Volunteers: Weds, 9:30 AM - 11 AM+
Nanci (financial secretary): Weds afternoon
Call for other times/changes
When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (983.1273) or contacting the president of the congregation.
Note: E-mails meant for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org. E-mails to Margaret and the church office should be addressed to info@saronlutheran.org.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members in December 2018.

Dec. 2 - Victor Coar
Jason Crockett
Dec. 4 - Phil Standen
Dec. 5 - Alexander Breyen
Dec. 7 - Dana Riley
Lorraine Mikesell
Adam Maly
Dec. 8 - Lee Carter
Dec. 11 - Robert Deaton
Dec. 12 - Cynthia Brown
Edward Brunner
Gloria Hopkins
Dec. 13 - Eric Standen
Deborah Standen
Dec. 16 – Charles Pater
Caden Zwar
Dec. 18 - Heather Pudell
Dec. 21 - Rebecca Sebrechts
Dec. 24 - Bernice Koski
Dec. 27 - Oliver Fortenbacher
Dec. 30 - Gretchen Oleson
Madison Dipert
Dec. 31 - Kristen Harper

Happy Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members in December 2018.

Dec. 18 – Dennis and Colleen Lundgren (47)
Dec. 26 – Brian and Marybeth Culverhouse
Dec. 30 - Mark and Judy Wedde

"God's Blessings for a very happy day and year round"

If there is anyone who has been omitted, or, if the dates are incorrect from the birthday and anniversary list, please call the church office at 983-1273. Thank you.

With Sympathy

We extend our thoughts and prayers to Laura Jean Pearson upon her death October 25. Her funeral service was held at Saron on November 2, 2018. Our prayers go out to Jean's daughter and son-in-law Christine and Roger Petzke, son and daughter-in-law Burt and Margaret Pearson, and the entire Pearson family.
God is our refuge and strength. Psalm 46:1a

WITH JOY

With joy we welcome Charles James Kohs into the community of faith at Saron through Holy Baptism on November 25. Charlie is the son of Scott and Katie Kohs.

ANNUAL MEETING

Set aside Sunday, January 27, for Saron's annual meeting. Immediately after our 2nd worship on that day we will have a potluck dinner, followed by the meeting at 1:00 PM. All voting members are encouraged to attend. Guests are welcome.

Worship

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sunday, Dec. 2 –
First Sunday of Advent
Jeremiah 33:14-16
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
Luke 21:25-36

Sunday, Dec. 9 –
Second Sunday of Advent
Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-1
Luke 3:1-6

Sunday, Dec. 16 –
Third Sunday of Advent
Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

Sunday, Dec. 23 –
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Micah 5:2-5a
Luke 1:46b-55
Psalm 80:1-7
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-55

Monday, Dec. 24
Nativity of Our Lord — Christmas Eve
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

Tuesday, Dec. 25
Nativity of Our Lord — Christmas Day
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]
John 1:1-14

Sunday, Dec. 30 –
First Sunday of Christmas
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

FORTIFY & fly

Thank you to everyone that participated in a busy November. The 24-Hour Prayer Vigil was inspirational, the Campaign Booklets answered many of our questions, Enrichment Gatherings provided more answers and reassurance, and the Advanced Commitments Event is all set to get the ball rolling with many early, sacrificial pledges.

Wow! Seeing it listed like that is even more impressive. We needed all of those things, including the Bible Studies in October, to prepare us for the next step. It was a way to strengthen our wings before we could expect to fly.

In December, we have just two events but they are the big ones. We will join together at our All-Church Banquet on December 14th at 6:30 at the Vineland Center in St. Joseph and December 16th is Commitment Sunday. We've put in the time and work. Soon we will be ready to make our 2019 pledge and 3-year Fortify & Fly financial commitment.

We ask that you wait to fill out your commitment card until Commitment Sunday. We will fill them out together as an act of worship. If you cannot be there, you may fill out your card and return it to the church but please contact a member of the Leadership Team if you have any questions. Watch your mailbox for Fortify & Fly Newsletter #3. Congratulations on making it this far!

POINSETTIA PLANTS

You are invited to purchase a poinsettia that will help beautify Saron's chancel at Christmas. You may pick up your plant(s) after the Christmas Eve service December 24th**. ORDER DEADLINE IS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12th.** Call the church office for more details or pick up an order form in the Sunday bulletin.

2019 FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2019 flower calendar is posted. Cost: $25.00/vase. This is an opportunity for you to give flowers in honor or memory of someone. The church orders the flowers (unless you indicate otherwise) and you can take the flowers home after 2nd service.

2019 OFFERING ENVELOPES

You may pick up your 2019 offering envelopes **beginning December 2!** They may be found near the church entrance doors. If you receive a giving statement (whether you give through the envelope system or electronically) there is likely a box for you.

PRAYER GROUP

Join us on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship. We meet in the sanctuary.

Nursery News

We could use another volunteer for the 8:30 am service. This could be someone who regularly attends early service or you could serve early nursery and attend late service. There is a sheet on the kiosk or let Marilyn Lucy know of your willingness.

Women of the ELCA

Deborah Circle

Deborah Circle will not meet in December. January 9th 2019, is the date for the Christmas Party at the home of Mary Kynast.

SARON CHURCH WOMEN BAKE SALE

Saron Church Women will be having a bake sale in the church narthex on Sunday, December 9th. 50% of the proceeds will go to the Saron Mentor Family Fund, 25% to ELCA Good Gifts, and 25% to the Berrien County Department of Health and Human Services Operation Good Cheer project (so foster children can each receive Christmas gifts). Please bring a baked item or items and, hopefully, make a purchase. This would be a good time to make Christmas treats. We will continue to collect monetary donations on the following Sunday, December 16. Thank you in advance for your support. It is very much appreciated. Contributions to the Mentor Family Fund are accepted throughout the year.

Learning book *of* faith

Open Scripture. Join the Conversation.

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

Please support Saron's youth on December 16 when they present "A Christmas to Believe In" at the 11:00 service.

EPHESUS BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Ephesus group will enjoy a holiday dinner together on Sunday, December 16, at 5:00 pm. Anyone interested in checking out this group is welcome to join us. This group enjoys Bible study, conversation, and sharing a meal together. We typically meet on the third Sunday of each month, rotating among the homes of those participating. Please call the Kynasts (269-921-3816 for Mary, 269-921-2786 for Bob) if you'd like to join in our December gathering -- or any of our sessions.

Thursday Morning Bible Study

This group will not meet again until after Christmas when we will continue our study on "God's Extraordinary Church: Studies in Ephesians." Watch for details as we gather on Thursday mornings from 9:30-11:00.

Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study

Saron's Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study will not meet from now through Advent. We will resume our studies on January 8.

The Men's Bible Study meets at 6:00pm at the church. At 7:00pm we adjourn for a time of fellowship (something to eat and something to drink). We know everyone is busy so Bible study is a "come as you can" group. All men are invited to join in.

We are studying the first 5 books of the bible. We will complete our study of Numbers when we reconvene in January.

For more information call or text Bob Kynast at 269-921-2786 or bobkynast@gmail.com or Sid at 312-209-1301 or sidmohn@gmail.com.

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17).

Men's monthly Bible Devotions and Breakfast

Men's Monthly Devotion resumes Saturday December 1st at the Galley Grill on Red Arrow Highway in Stevensville at 9:00 am. The Galley Grill is on the Super 8 Motel property at 4296 Red Arrow Highway. All Saron men are invited and guests are welcome!

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

On December 2nd, 6:30 p.m. in the upstairs lounge, we are turning back the years to a classic novel by Theodore Dreiser, "Sister Carrie". This story chronicles a young country girl's move to the city to realize the America Dream. The year is 1900 and Dreiser, with this book, helped change the direction of American literature. This novel is part of a theme for 1ST SUNDAY this year. We are comparing author portrayals of women at different times in history. Very interesting. Come offer your opinions.
Please join us. All are welcome at any of our discussions. Questions? Contact Kathy Cowall (269)428-354 or kcowall@hotmail.com.

"Reading one book is like eating one potato chip." (Diane Duane)

Support

A Special Message for Travelers and Those Who Prefer Electronic Giving

Saron offers the option to give electronically for your convenience. Please contact the church office if you have any questions or to enroll. Thanks.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, e-mail Matt Bradley and Nanci Fenrick to receive the account number for which the shares will be transferred to. Once the transaction has been completed, e-mail Matt Bradley and Nanci Fenrick the name of the stock, the number of shares, and the date of the transfer. This allows the transaction to be completed and ensures it is included on your giving statement.
Thanks! Matt Bradley, treasurer

Are you a Thrivent member?

If so, you have an opportunity to help with the funding of a work project, as coordinated through our Outreach or Facilities teams. Please let Janet Oleson or Pastor know if you are a member, have interest or questions.

Hospitality

Sign Up for Refreshments

Please consider signing up for refreshments to be served after worship on Sundays. There is a sign-up sheet on the Narthex bulletin board.

Outreach

ELCA GOOD GIFTS

It is time to start thinking about Christmas! When you are thinking of the perfect gift for a family member or friend, consider purchasing an ELCA GOOD GIFT ornament. You will have the opportunity to support the ELCA GOOD GIFTS campaign by selecting an ornament from the Christmas tree in Saron's narthex. There will be a variety of ornaments to chose from, prices ranging from $10.00-$500.00. The back of each ornament may be personalized. Checks may be made out to Saron, with ELCA GOOD GIFTS on the MEMO line. God's Work. Our Hands.

Thank you, Outreach

FACEBOOK & WORSHIP VIDEO
We love to share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. Portions of our worship are being recorded for the purpose of sharing with those who are not able to attend worship, particularly those who are home bound. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear on a video, please contact Aaron Becker (at the camera) or Pastor.

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN
Large cans of fruit are always needed at the Soup Kitchen & can be dropped off anytime at the church. Any questions or to volunteer or provide cookies please contact Kathie Bradley at 269-427-7083.

MEET ME AT THE FREEZER
We will need a volunteer to be in charge of organizing "Meet Me at the Freezer" project. If you have interest, contact Pastor. Thank you! The freezer meals are available down in the dining room in the LARGE freezer. If you know of someone who could use a meal, for any reason, please take it to them or invite them to take one after worship. No questions asked. Enjoy!

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE
A task force at Saron has been looking at issues of inclusivity and how to best live into our mission of "joyfully sharing God's love for all!!!" Serving on the task force are Kati and Nick Hooper, Laurel Gacek, Laura Hicks, Sid Mohn, and Pastor. Contact any of these folks if you would like to know more.

INTERFAITH ACTION
General Meetings of Interfaith Action will occur on the 4th Tuesday of the odd months of the year. Working Groups will meet during even months of the year. Each of these groups has been establishing goals for 2019. More details to come!

Persons interested in joining a working group should contact the Coordinator or Sid Mohn (sidmohn@gmail.com).

1. Great Waters Initiative: advancing safe drinking water for Michigan, preserving the resources of the Great Lakes, and advocating access to water as threatened by climate change. Coordinator: Karla Donnell Bragg. Karladb@comcast.net Next

2. Green Faith: greening our communities of faith through environmental stewardship. Coordinator: Sue Greenwood. Tawnyginger@gmail.com.

3. Dignity of All: promoting inclusion and justice to counter discrimination based on race, gender, faith, sexual orientation/gender identity; ensuring protections and opportunities for the poor. Coordinator: Laura Hicks. Lhicks42@gmail.com.

4. No Longer a Stranger: welcoming the stranger as neighbor through generous refugee policy and practice and fair and just immigration policy and practice. Coordinator: Robert Burgess. Roblloydburgess@gmail.com.

5. Keep the Peace: advocating for peace in global conflicts; addressing gun violence in the US: Coordinator: Glyn Durston. Miglynd@comcast.net.

COMPANION SYNOD NEWS
If you would like to learn more about our companion synod – the Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras – and the situation there, please find information posted on the kiosk.

Facilities

USED INK CARTRIGES NEEDED
Please save your used ink cartridges as we receive rebates to be used on office supplies. There is a collection box in the Narthex. Thank you.

Council News

Attendance Record	
10/28/2018	*89*
11/04/2018	*117*
11/11/2018	*85*
11/18/2018	*97*
11/25/2018	*113*

Saron's Council Members – 2018

Karen Hinckley (326-0688) – President
Judi Huff (473-5075) – Vice President
Matt Bradley (419-306-5780) – Treasurer
Karen Johnson (269-983-2800) – Secretary
+++
Tyler Cook (429-5550) – Worship
Brad Frey (921-8618) – Facilities
Scott Gaspari (847-373-8825) – Youth
Nolan Becker (269-558-3252) – Youth
Don Hafer (269-470-2255) - Support
Karen Johnson (269-983-2800) – Hospitality
Judy Huff (473-5075) - Hospitality
Kristen Harper (277-9277) – Learning
Amy Nelson (920-227-5354) – Outreach
Joan Oleson (983-1273) office;
983-2475 home)– Pastor

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

December 2018

We're on Facebook! Like us at
www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

Saron 2018
December Volunteer Schedule

	December 2 First Sunday of Advent		***December 9 Second Sunday of Advent***		***December 16 Third Sunday of Advent***		***December 23 Fourth Sunday of Advent***		***December 30 First Sunday of Christmas***	
	8:30	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**
	Sue Rood	Bill Oleson	Pauline Ngonyani	Bob Kynast	Marilyn Frey	Youth Christmas program	Eric Standen	Scott Kohs cantata	Wendy King	Bob Deaton
Reader/ Comm.Asst	Karen Hinckley	Mary Kynast	Steve Bell	Tyler Cook	Sally Schmuhl	Denise Cook	Jim Manore	Judi Huff	Sue Rood	Matt Bradley
Ushers	Walt & Sally Schmuhl	Darlene Kiessel & Krin Jurgensen	Fritz Knauf & Jim Manore	Scott and Lindsay Gaspari	Fran Richards & Elizabeth Kunkel	Peter & Karen Johnson	Dave & Sue Bailey	David & Emma young	Eric & Deb Standen	John Olson & Tyler Cook
Acolyte	Troy & Eric Burrow	Grant Gacek	Brooke Henderson	Molly Becker	Brandon Burrow	Meredith Gacek	Brooke Henderson	Molly Becker		Mia & Alaina Bradley
Nursery 1st	Allison Rood	Karen Hinckley	Mary Alice Brunner	Meredith Gacek	Deb Standen	Kate Kohs	Marilyn Lucy	Laura Stark	Marilyn Frey	Mary Kynast
Nursery 2nd	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul
Bldg. close		Bob Hopkins		Brad and Marilyn Frey		Dennis & Colleen Lundgren		Jerry and Ruth Stelling		Bob Hopkins
Snacks	Irma Gorman	Frieda Williams		Carol Hafer						
Flowers	Pat Breyen		Gacek family		Dennis & Colleen Lundgren		Don and Carol Hafer		Poinsettias	

December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 9:40 a.m. SCS Classes						*1* 9:00 a.m. Men's Devotion/Breakfast - Galley Grill, Stevensville
2 Worship & Learning (see above) 12:00 p.m. F&F Leadership 6:30 p.m. 1ST Sunday Book Discussion Group	***3*** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	***4*** 7:00 p.m. Inclusivity Task Force	***5*** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 p.m. Soup Supper 7:00 p.m. Worship	***6*** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	***7***	*8*
9 Worship & Learning (see above) SCW Bake Sale	***10*** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group Newsletter Articles due	***11*** 7:00 p.m. Support Committee	***12*** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 p.m. Soup Supper 7:00 p.m. Worship	***13*** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	***14*** 6:30 p.m. All Church Banquet	*15*
16 Commitment Sunday Worship & Learning (see above) 11:00 a.m. Youth Christmas Program	***17*** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group 7:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting	***18***	***19*** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 p.m. Soup Supper 7:00 p.m. Worship	***20*** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	***21***	*22*
23 Worship & Learning (see above)	***24*** 7:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m. Worship with Communion	***25*** 9:30 a.m. Holy Communion Christmas Day	***26*** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	***27*** *Pastor - vacation*	***28*** *Pastor - vacation*	*29* *Pastor - vacation*
30 Worship Learning	***31*** *Pastor - vacation*					